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## FROM THE CHAIR

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Greetings SIGIR members and friends! This is an exciting year for SIGIR as we mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *SIGIR Conference*. Did you know that SIGIR is actually tied for the second oldest ACM SIG<sup>1</sup>? SIGIR, the organization, was founded in 1963, held its first co-sponsored meeting in 1971, and its first conference in 1978. At this year's *SIGIR Conference* in Tokyo, Japan, there will be several events to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Conference, including recognition of the pre-2002 Test of Time paper award recipients. We have also published a special issue of the *SIGIR Forum* to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conference, and to pay homage to these papers, which document the history and evolution of IR research and practice as evidenced through the conference proceedings. We hope this special issue will become a precious part of your collection.

Meanwhile, this issue contains the recent Test of Time award paper – as announced at SIGIR 2016, the award went to Thorsten Joachims, Laura Granka, Bing Pan, Helene Hembrooke and Geri Gay for their SIGIR 2005 paper “Accurately Interpreting Clickthrough Data as Implicit Feedback”. While the use of clickthrough data is standard practice in most contemporary IR systems, this paper was published at a time when researchers were first beginning to explore the usefulness of it, especially as relevance feedback. In this research, Joachims and colleagues not only explored if clickthrough data could be used as relevance feedback, but also in what circumstances. In particular, they discovered that clickthrough data should more accurately be understood as relative, rather than absolute, relevance judgments.

Since our annual conference last year in Pisa, Italy, the SIGIR Executive Committee and Volunteers have been busy implementing and investigating many of the initiatives and issues we discussed during the business meeting. Below is a summary of our major activities.

- Developed and instituted fiscal policies that should allow organizers of the SIGIR Conference, CHIIR and ICTIR to **reduce the cost of conference registration** for SIGIR members.
- Finalized the **SIGIR Student Affairs Chair** position description. The major role of the SIGIR Student Affairs Chair is to make sure that every student attendee is improving her or his network within the community; essentially, the Student Affairs Chair will make sure that no student is left behind! The **SIGIR Student Affairs Chair** will organize special events, such as the SIGIR student events, improve connections among students (i.e., the leaders of the future) and will encourage senior community members from academia and industry to talk to students about their needs, research, and career goals. Laura Dietz serves as the inaugural Student Affairs Chair.
- Finalized the **SIGIR Student Liaison** position description. This included creating an appointment and application procedure for identifying Student Liaisons. We solicited applications and selected the inaugural class of liaisons, who will be announced at this year's SIGIR Conference. The role of Student Liaisons is to help ensure that student attendees are introduced and tightly knit into our community, enacting a “no student left behind” mission. Student Liaisons will work with the Student Affairs Chair to design student events and luncheons, and identify other opportunities for student engagement. Student Liaisons will also serve as the voice of students, providing feedback about issues of concern to students.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://historywiki.acm.org/sigs/Main\\_Page](http://historywiki.acm.org/sigs/Main_Page)

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- Co-sponsored the upcoming **50 years of the ACM Turing Award Celebration**, which will take place on June 23-24. We are **sending 10 SIGIR student members** to this event.
  - Nominated over **ten early-career IR researchers** for the **ACM Future of Computing Academy**. In addition to these nominations, we also nominated several members for other ACM awards and honors.
  - Created and instituted a **SIGIR Best Short Paper Award**, which will be given at this year's SIGIR conference. We also **sponsored the CHIIR Best Paper Award**, and plan to complete paperwork to make the best paper award for this conference, as well as ICTIR, official ACM SIGIR Awards.
  - Outlined an **Industry Liaison program** to provide the SIGIR Executive Committee with an industry perspective on SIGIR as an organization and conference, and IR research more broadly; to assist with promoting SIGIR within industries and forging stronger connections; and to help plan programming.
  - Co-sponsored the **CRA-W Grad Cohort Workshop**, which took place April 7-8 in Washington, D.C., and sent a SIGIR volunteer to staff a booth and advertise SIGIR.
  - Formalized **procedures for giving authors of ACM Transactions on Information Systems (TOIS) papers** the opportunity to orally present their work at the SIGIR, CHIIR or ICTIR conferences, in collaboration with TOIS editor, Maarten de Rijke (see <http://sigir.org/conferences/tois-presentation/>).
  - Increased the budget allocation for the **Friends of SIGIR program**, reviewed allocation policies and drafted new online application form.
  - Created a **Conference Code of Conduct Anti-Harassment Policy** (see <http://sigir.org/conferences/conference-code-of-conduct/>).

In addition to these accomplishments, we also have several new initiatives that are underway.

- At this year's SIGIR Conference, we will host a **Diversity and Inclusions Luncheon** on Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of this event is to provide a forum for education and discussion of issues related to diversity and inclusion in the SIGIR community. The scope of diversity and inclusion encompasses many things including particular characteristics that people possess, as well as research diversity and inclusion with respect to topics, approaches and audiences. We hope this event will inaugurate a series of programs to address diversity and inclusion in the community.
- We will develop procedures to implement **ACM artifact review and badging** with respect to repeatability, replicability and reproducibility of research (see <https://www.acm.org/publications/policies/artifact-review-badging>).
- Evaluation and update of the SIGIR website's information architecture.
- Evaluation and update/creation of SIGIR promotional materials.

With respect to our conference calendar: *JCDL* will be held June 19-23 in Toronto, Canada; *ICTIR* will be held October 1-4 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands; *CIKM* will be held November 6-10 in Singapore; *WSDM* will be held February 6-8, 2018 in Los Angeles, California, USA; and *CHIIR* will be held March 11-15, 2018 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA.

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Please feel free to send us any issues you'd like us to consider, or any feedback you have about our initiatives and accomplishments. We hope to see you in a few months at this year's SIGIR Conference in Tokyo, Japan!

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